

Water Access Licences in NSW



What is a NSW water licence?

A WATER LICENCE is an entitlement to a **share of the available water** in an aquifer or river. It is not a guaranteed volume of water each year.*



The water licence must be linked to a **water supply works and use approval** in order to take water (e.g. pump site).

Water Sharing Plans (WSPs)

Water sharing plans are soon to be called Water Resource Plans for inland valleys.

Water Management Act 2000

WSPs establish rules for sharing available water between the environment and different types of water users:

Main water access licence categories

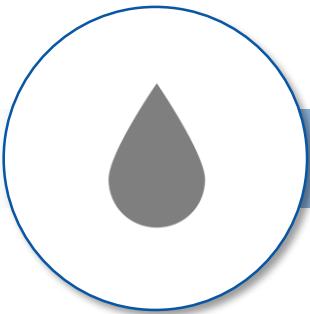
High security licences

Conveyance licences

General security licences

Floodplain harvesting licences, supplementary licences

*The volume of water that licensed users receive, known as an allocation or Available Water Determination (AWD), varies from year to year based on the licence category and size of their individual entitlement. This allocation is dependent on a range of factors including dam storage levels, river flows and catchment conditions. (<http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/water-management/water-availability/how-water-is-allocated>)



Difference between access entitlement and allocation

Ongoing (or perpetual) right to an exclusive share of available water.

Water Access Entitlement

Water Allocation

Right to access a specific volume of water for use, trade or carry-over *within a water year*.



Trade of entitlements and allocations

Entitlement Trade
Permanent (ongoing/perpetual)

Joint
or
Separate

Allocation Trade
Temporary (within a water year)

Sell
entire licence

or

Trade
parts of licence
for defined
period

Trade of a
perpetual right
to all future
allocations.

Trade
water allocation

Trade of a
specific volume
of water *within*
a water year



Rights or entitlements of a WAL holder in NSW

A WAL gives the holder a right or entitlement to:

a specific **share in the available water** within a particular water management area or water source.

“share component”

take water at specific times, rate or circumstances from specified areas or locations.

“extraction component”



Please note that a water access licence does not confer a right on any person to use water for a particular purpose or to construct or use a water supply work.



Annual usage by licence holders is limited to no more than 100% of entitlement per year + transfers in – transfers out, no matter how much water is in the account. It's the tool used to keep total usage below the water sharing plan limit.*

*Individual Water Sharing Plans and licence categories may have different rules.